

# Legislative Analysis

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## **KINDERGARTEN ENTRY AGE**

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**Senate Bill 315 (Substitute S-6)**

**Senate Bill 316 (Substitute S-4)**

**Sponsor: Sen. Darwin Booher**

**House Committee: Education**

**Senate Committee: Education**

**Complete to 6-6-12**

## **A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILLS 315 & 316 AS PASSED BY THE SENATE 5-3-12**

### **Senate Bill 315 – Revised School Code**

Senate Bill 315 would amend the Revised School Code (MCL 380.114) to move up the minimum age requirement for a child enrolling in kindergarten so that a child would have to be five years of age by September 1, rather than December 1 (as now). The requirement would be phased in over three years, starting in the 2013-14 school year.

Under current law, in school districts that provide kindergarten, a child may enroll in kindergarten if the child is at least 5 years old on December 1 of the school year of enrollment. Under Senate Bill 315, a child could enroll in kindergarten if he or she were at least five years old on November 1 of the 2013-14 school year, on October 1 of the 2014-15 school year, and on the September 1 immediately preceding enrollment for the 2015-16 school year.

The bill would, however, permit the parent or guardian of a child who is under 5 years old on the required date but who will be at least 5 years old by December 1 of the school year to enroll their student. To do so, the parent or guardian must notify the school district by June 1 immediately prior to the school year of the intention to enroll the child in kindergarten for the upcoming school year. (If a child becomes a resident of the school district after June 1, the written notification must be provided by August 1.) The district could make a recommendation that the child is not ready to enroll in kindergarten due to the child's age or other factors, but the parent or guardian would still have the choice to enroll the child. The bill would require districts enrolling children who turn 5 between September 1 and December 1 to report by December 31 the number of such children enrolled.

The bill would also delete an outdated provision permitting children who turn five years of age before March 1 of a school year to enroll in a kindergarten program in a district with semi-annual promotions.

## Senate Bill 316 – State School Aid Act

Senate Bill 316 would amend the State School Aid Act (MCL 388.1606) by amending the definition of "membership." Under the act, to be counted in membership, a pupil must be five years old by December 1. The bill, instead, specifies that the pupil must meet the minimum age requirement established in the Revised School Code.

### FISCAL IMPACT:

**State Impact:** The bill would likely lower enrollment and pupil membership counts for school districts by making five-year-olds born between September 2 and December 1 ineligible (over a three-year phase-in) for enrollment in kindergarten in the school year in which they turn five.<sup>1</sup>

Based on enrollment data provided by the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), recent birthdate trends and estimates of migration patterns, an estimated 21,000 kindergartners turn five years old between September 2 and December 1 during the school year they are enrolled in kindergarten. Phasing in the age requirement over three years would essentially reduce the number of children in three cohorts, starting in 2013-14, by about 7,000 pupils. However, the number of pupils actually impacted by the bill depends on the extent to which parents exercise their choice to enroll their child.

In the 2013-14 school year, children turning 5 years of age after November 1 would be ineligible to enroll in kindergarten, affecting about 7,000 pupils. This cohort would be smaller than it otherwise would be under current law by about 7,000 pupils. In the 2014-15 school year, children turning 5 years of age after October 1 of the school year would be ineligible to enroll in kindergarten, affecting about 14,000 pupils. This cohort, however, would include about 7,000 children who turned five after November 1, 2013, but would still be about 7,000 pupils below what it otherwise would be under current law. In the 2015-16 school year, children turning five years of age after September 1 immediately prior to the school year would be ineligible for kindergarten, affecting about 21,000 pupils. This cohort, however, would include about 14,000 children who turned five after October 1, 2014, but would still be about 7,000 pupils below what it otherwise would be under current law.

Based on a weighted average foundation allowance of \$7,200, each of the three smaller cohorts would reduce state spending by about \$50.4 million. In 2013-14, with one smaller cohort, state spending would be reduced by about \$50.4 million. In 2014-15, with two smaller cohorts, state spending would be reduced by about \$100.8 million. When the bill is fully phased in, in 2015-16 with three smaller cohorts, state spending would be reduced by about \$151.2 million. The reduction in state spending would

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<sup>1</sup> The current version of the bill continues to provide parents with the choice to enroll their children in kindergarten upon written notification to the district. Earlier versions of this bill (and a companion House bill) would have provided a more strict cut-off, with House Bill 4513 (Substitute H-3), not allowing for parental choice beginning with the 2014-15 school year and having a September 1 deadline. The House later adopted an H-6 substitute that mirrors SB 315 (S-6), as passed by the Senate.

continue as each cohort tracked through the K-12 system, as shown in Table 1, through the 2027-2028 school year. Essentially, a smaller kindergarten class in one year means a smaller first grade class the following year, a smaller second grade class the next year, and so on until graduation.

However the bill provides parents/guardians with the choice to enroll children turning five after the cut-off day if they notify the school district by June 1 (or August 1) prior to the school year. To the extent parents exercise this choice, district pupil membership counts would not fall as much, and the amount of savings realized by the state would decline as well. It is through this written notification/choice provision that parents could enroll their child in a developmental kindergarten program. About half of the pupils in developmental kindergarten programs turn five between September 1 and December 1.<sup>2</sup>

Another issue that may affect kindergarten enrollment is the treatment of kindergarten students for School Aid purposes. For the current school year (2011-12), the School Aid Act provides that full-time equated (FTE) membership for kindergarten pupils requires half of the number of class hours as FTE pupils in grades 1-12. Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, required number of class hours for FTE kindergarten pupils and FTE pupils in grades 1-12 are the same (1,098 hours), with some limited exceptions. It is anticipated that most districts will no longer offer half-day programs or only offer a few sections of half-day programs.<sup>3</sup>

**Local Impact:** Senate Bill 315 would have varying impacts on school districts, ultimately depending on the number of pupils whose entry into kindergarten is delayed. The total revenue loss to school districts would be the amount of savings, noted above, realized by the state. This loss of revenue would continue as the three smaller cohorts tracked through each grade until graduation, through the 2027-2028 school year.

The bill would also impose challenges on districts as they would have to align staff with enrollment, as the smaller cohort tracked through. School districts might, for instance, have to re-assign staff within buildings or between buildings to account for a smaller cohort moving through each grade level. As a class tracks through, it may only require three classes, for example, for a grade when it otherwise would have required four. In other instances, a school district may not be able to reduce the number of classes, given constraints on class size, so it would have to absorb the loss of students (and the resulting loss of revenue) without an offsetting reduction in faculty expenses.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

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<sup>2</sup> Earlier versions of the bill and a companion House bill had a firm cut-off date (and no parental choice) and would have made children turning five years of age between September 1 and December 1 ineligible for state funding and, effectively, ineligible for developmental kindergarten.

<sup>3</sup> The FY 2012-13 School Aid bill (HB 5372) assumes \$20.0 million in savings due to some districts continuing to offer half-day programs.

**Table 1  
Impact of Senate Bill 315 on Pupil Counts**

**Current Law - December 1 Cut-Off Date for Kindergarten Enrollment**

	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
<b>K</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>1</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>2</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>3</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>4</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>5</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>6</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>7</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>8</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>9</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>10</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>11</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>12</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>

**SB 315 - September 1 Cut-Off Date for Kindergarten Enrollment (3-year phase-in)**

	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
<b>K</b>	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>1</b>	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>2</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>3</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>4</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>5</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>6</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>7</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>8</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>9</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
<b>10</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000
<b>11</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000
<b>12</b>	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,560,000</b>	<b>1,553,000</b>	<b>1,546,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,539,000</b>	<b>1,546,000</b>	<b>1,553,000</b>

<b>Pupil Impact</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(7,000)</b>	<b>(14,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(14,000)</b>	<b>(7,000)</b>
<b>Savings (Millions)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$50.4)</b>	<b>(\$100.8)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$151.2)</b>	<b>(\$100.8)</b>	<b>(\$50.4)</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Pupil counts are for illustrative purposes.
- (2) Assumes no change in the foundation allowance.